

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-14

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FM AMEMBASSY MANAGUA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7331

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINS, PINT, SHUM, NU

SUBJECT: HEAVY-HANDED GN TREATMENT OF MISSION NICARAGUAN EMPLOYEES
BY GUARDIA NACIONAL

REF: MANAGUA 3513

1. DURING COURSE OF MEETING WITH PRESIDENT SOMOZA ON AUGUST 1, CHARGE RAISED TWO RECENT INCIDENTS INVOLVING NICARAGUAN EMPLOYEES OF THE US MISSION AS EXAMPLES OF THE TYPE OF GN/POLICE BEHAVIOR WHICH REFLECTS NEGATIVELY ON THE GON. THIS TELEGRAM PROVIDES BACKGROUND FOR CHARGE'S REMARKS. THE PRESIDENT'S REACTION WAS REPORTED REFTEL.

2. THE FIRST INCIDENT INVOLVED A SENIOR NICARAGUAN EMPLOYEE IN THE MISSION'S GENERAL SERVICES OFFICE. ON SATURDAY, JULY 29 THE EMPLOYEE ADVISED MISSION OFFICERS THAT SHORTLY AFTER MIDNIGHT THAT DATE HE, HIS TEENAGE SON AND A NEIGHBOR'S 16-YEAR-OLD BOY HAD BEEN ROUSTED FROM THE FRONT DOOR OF THEIR HOME BY A POLICE PATROL WHICH WAS APPARENTLY RESPONDING TO SHOTS WHICH SEEMED TO HAVE BEEN FIRED SOME BLOCKS AWAY. NEIGHBORHOOD IS MIDDLE CLASS NICARAGUAN AND FAIRLY ACTIVE AT THAT EARLY MORNING HOUR. ACCORDING TO OUR EMPLOYEE, HE AND HIS SONS WERE TAKEN TO THE LOCAL POLICE STATION AND HELD FOR
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SOME HOURS, ALONG WITH ABOUT FIFTY OTHER PEOPLE FROM THE SAME NEIGHBORHOOD. NO CHARGES WERE BROUGHT AGAINST OUR EMPLOYEE, AND HE WAS NOT ACCUSED OF ILLEGAL OR IMPROPER ACTIVITY, BUT HE WAS NOT RELEASED UNTIL HE PAID 50 CORDOBAS (US\$7.00) EACH FOR HIMSELF, HIS SON AND THE OTHER YOUTH TO A POLICE OFFICER.

3. IN THE SECOND CASE, A SENIOR ACCOUNTANT IN THE AID CONROLLER'S

OFFICE HAS REPORTED THAT SHE AND TWO COMPANIONS WERE RETURNING TO MANAGUA FROM A DINNER PARTY AT ABOUT 00:45 ON JULY 29 WHEN THEIR CAR WAS STOPPED BY A GUARDIA PATROL IN THE RESIDENTIAL AREA OF LAS NUBES, SOME 20 KM. SOUTH OF CENTRAL MANAGUA AND FAR FROM THE LOCATION OF THE INCIDENT DESCRIBED ABOVE. ACCORDING TO THE EMPLOYEE, AT LEAST THREE FULLY UNIFORMED MEN APPROACHED THE CAR AND ACCUSED THE OCCUPANTS OF BEING MEMBERS OF THE FRENTE SANDINISTA AND DEMANDED ANY WEAPONS THAT THE OCCUPANTS MIGHT HAVE. WHEN THE DRIVER DENIED ANY CONNECTION WITH THE FSLN AND OFFERED TO OPEN THE CAR FOR SEARCH, ONE OF THE UNIFORMED MEN STATED "THIS IS A HOLDUP" AND FORCED THE THREE PERSONS OUT OF THE CAR. EACH WAS HELD AT GUNPOINT AND A KNIFE WAS PRESSED AGAINST THE BODY OF THE LONE MAN IN THE CAR. ALL CASH AND JEWELRY WERE TAKEN FROM THE CAR'S OCCUPANTS AND THE KEYS TO THE CAR WERE THROWN INTO A NEARBY RAVINE. IN SEARCHING THE PURSE OF THE AID EMPLOYEE, ONE OF THE UNIFORMED MEN FOUND THE IDENTIFICATION CARNET ISSUED BY THE EMBASSY AND HELD IT UP IN FRONT OF ITS BEARER, ASKING IF IT WAS TRUE THAT SHE WAS AN EMBASSY EMPLOYEE. WHEN SHE ANSWERED AFFIRMATIVELY, HE SAID, "I AM GOING TO KEEP THIS AND IF I EVER HEAR THAT YOU HAVE REPORTED THIS INCIDENT, I WILL FIND YOU AND KILL YOU." WITH THIS, THE UNIFORMED MEN RETURNED TO A BLUE-AND-WHITE JEEP IDENTICAL TO THOSE USED BY POLICE PATROLS AND LEFT THE SCENE.

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